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COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

STATE CORPORATION COMMISSION

AT RICHMOND, JUNE 1, 2000

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA, ex rel.

STATE CORPORATION COMMISSION

Ex Parte: In re: Investigation CASE NO. PUC000045  
to implement 711 abbreviated dialing  
access to the Telecommunications  
Relay Service in Virginia

FINAL ORDER

In its Order Initiating Investigation and Requesting Comments dated March 28, 2000 ("Initiating Order"), the Commission concluded that 711 abbreviated dialing would facilitate the hearing and speech disabled community's access to the Telecommunications Relay Service ("TRS") system. The Commission initiated an investigation into implementing 711 abbreviated dialing access to TRS, established a comment period on the proposed 711 implementation, and designated a 711 Implementation Committee.

By this Final Order, the Commission is adopting a 711 access implementation schedule.

As stated above, our Initiating Order established a comment period. Comments were received from Bell Atlantic-Virginia, Inc. ("BA-VA"), the Virginia Telecommunications Industry

Association ("VTIA"), AT&T Communications of Virginia, Inc. ("AT&T"), Cox Virginia Telcom, Inc. ("Cox"), and ALLTEL Communications, Inc. ("ALLTEL"). Commenting parties strongly supported our efforts to implement 711 dialing access for TRS. The Commission received no comments from any Local Exchange Carrier ("LEC") or Payphone Service Provider ("PSP") expressing concerns or limitations on their ability to implement 711; therefore, we expect no implementation problems. There were no negative comments received regarding the implementation of 711 or the approach outlined in our Initiating Order.

In addition to the comment period, our Initiating Order established a 711 Implementation Committee. This Committee consists of representatives of BA-VA, AT&T, VTIA, the Virginia Department for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing ("VDDHH"), Cox, ALLTEL, GTE ("GTE South Incorporated"), Sprint and the Staff of the Commission's Division of Communications. The 711 Implementation Committee met on May 22, 2000, and identified the tasks, activities, and schedule necessary for implementing 711 dialing. The 711 Implementation Committee agreed that a new TRS toll free number should be utilized for routing the 711 calls. A bill message or bill insert for carriers' use in notifying customers of this new dialing service was developed. The 711 Implementation Committee further agreed on an implementation schedule as follows:

- Affected telecommunications equipment will be modified to handle 711 calls by June 19, 2000;
- A test period of May 29 - June 19, 2000, will be used by LECs and PSPs for testing the new 711 system before it is available to the general public;
- An automated test message will be available when testing the translations and call-thru testing from May 29 - June 19, 2000. Anyone testing beyond June 19, 2000, will reach a live TRS Communications Assistant;
- AT&T will use the relay service to promote 711 awareness to Virginia customers before and/or after each relay call from June 5 through July 24, 2000;
- A public access cutover date of June 26, 2000, will be established for having the 711 dialing access available to the public;
- LECs will include a bill message or bill insert in all customer telephone bills no later than August 31, 2000;  
and
- LECs will update the customer guide pages of telephone directories for the next scheduled publication to include information on the new 711 access number. The TTY and Voice toll free numbers currently used to reach TRS will continue to appear in the customer guide pages.

In order for the hearing and speech disabled communities to have the broadest possible access to this service, we believe that 711 should be implemented statewide and that all Incumbent Local Exchange Carriers ("ILECs") and facilities-based Competitive Local Exchange Carriers ("CLECs") should implement 711 dialing. Also, PSPs should implement 711 access in their "smart phones".<sup>1</sup>

Accordingly, IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED:

(1) All ILECs and facilities-based CLECs operating in the Commonwealth shall modify their switches to translate calls dialed as 711 to the assigned new TRS toll free number, 800-229-5752, in order to route 711 dialed calls to the TRS provider.

(2) All PSPs shall modify "smart phones" to translate calls dialed as 711, directly from the payphone itself, to the assigned new TRS toll free number, 800-229-5752, in order to route 711 dialed calls to the TRS provider.

(3) Existing TRS toll free numbers, 800-828-1120 (TTY) and 800-828-1140 (Voice), shall remain active for those customers who desire to continue using the existing system.

(4) ILECs, facilities-based CLECs, and PSPs must adhere to the following schedule:

By June 19, 2000

Implement equipment  
modifications to translate

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<sup>1</sup> Payphones that can be programmed to route the 711 call directly to the TRS Center are considered "smart phones."

calls dialed as 711 to the assigned toll free number, 800-229-5752.

May 29 - June 19, 2000      711 access testing period.

June 19, 2000      LECs and PSPs should report their ready status to the Commission's Division of Communications. LECs should report their ready status via email: [sboclair@scc.state.va.us](mailto:sboclair@scc.state.va.us) or call 804-371-9207. PSPs should report their ready status via email: [jmullenaux@scc.state.va.us](mailto:jmullenaux@scc.state.va.us) or call 804-371-9850.

June 26, 2000      711 public access cutover date.

June 26 - August 31, 2000      Bill insert/message included in all customer bills.

(5) The bill insert or bill message to be included, no later than August 31, 2000, in all customer bills announcing service availability as of June 26, 2000, shall contain the following:

VA RELAY - IT'S AS EASY AS 7-1-1

Now you can dial 7-1-1 to reach the Virginia Telecommunications Relay Service (VA Relay) 24 hours a day, every day.

What is VA Relay and how does it work? It is a service that relays a conversation between a person with a speech or hearing disability using a TTY (Text Telephone) and a hearing person using a regular telephone.

The person using the TTY types his or her conversation and the message is relayed to the other party by a Communications Assistant ("CA"). The CA then relays the hearing person's exact words by typing them back to the TTY user. All CAs have been specially trained to help conversations flow with ease and accuracy. All calls are handled with strictest confidentiality.

From now on, when you call VA Relay from inside Virginia, simply dial 7-1-1. There will be no charge for local calls and a discount will apply on toll calls you make within Virginia, the same as you experience today. All options available to VA Relay users through the existing 800 numbers will be available to 7-1-1 users. You may still use VA Relay by dialing the 800 numbers you currently use. These numbers are 1-800-828-1120 (TTY) and 1-800-828-1140 (Voice).

If you are having trouble dialing 7-1-1 from your home telephone, please call your local telephone company repair service telephone number. This number is in the front of your telephone directory. If you experience trouble dialing 7-1-1 at your business or a public location, please notify the appropriate person at the establishment.

To learn more about VA Relay and 7-1-1, you may contact the Virginia Department for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing at 1-800-552-7917 (Voice/TTY).

**A NOTE TO ALL VA RELAY USERS:**  
**Please note that 7-1-1 is to be used only to**  
**reach the VA Relay Center.**  
**For EMERGENCIES you should continue to use**  
**9-1-1.**

(6) Proof of notice of the bill insert or bill message included in all customer bills announcing 711 access service availability shall be required no later than August 31, 2000.

(7) The Customer Guide pages of telephone directories shall be updated for the next scheduled publication to include the use of 711 abbreviated dialing access. The existing toll free numbers for VA Relay, 1-800-828-1120 (TTY) and 1-800-828-1140 (Voice), should continue to be published.

(8) Bell Atlantic will submit by June 16, 2000, an update to the Local Exchange Routing Guide concerning the availability of 711 dialing in Virginia effective as of June 26, 2000.